

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1.-8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently Amended) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged; and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to within said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity, and said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

10. (Previously Presented) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said mouth member is formed with a passage that is in communication with the developer inlet such that said passage faces the developer stored in said developer container, and said passage is connected with said developing outlet that is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

11. (Previously Presented) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said shutter member has a shaft-like configuration and is movable in the direction of an axis of said developer outlet.

12. (Previously Presented) The developer container as claimed in claim 9, wherein said shutter member is biased by a biasing member from an inside toward an outside of the developer container and movable between a closed position where said developer outlet is

blocked and an open position where said developer outlet is unblocked.

13. (Previously Presented) A developer container comprising:  
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;  
a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;  
and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said mouth member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion, and wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and

wherein said mouth member is formed with a passage that is in communication with a developer inlet of said mouth member such that said passage faces the developer stored in said storing member, and said passage is connected with said developing outlet that is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) The developer container as claimed in claim 13, wherein said shutter member has a shaft-like configuration and is movable in the direction of an axis of said developer outlet.

16. (Previously Presented) The developer container as claimed in claim 13, wherein said shutter member is biased by a biasing member from an inside toward an outside of the developer container and movable between a closed position where said developer outlet is blocked and an open position where said developer outlet is unblocked.

17. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to within said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity, and said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

18. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said developer container is removably mounted on a mount portion of the image forming apparatus and said mouth member of said developer container is formed at the lower portion of the developer container and said developer outlet is disposed at a side portion of said developer container when said developer container is mounted on the mount portion of the image forming apparatus.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~ An image forming apparatus ~~as claimed in claim 17~~ comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;  
and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity,  
and said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and

wherein said developer replenishing device is provided with a nozzle which is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet, and said shutter member is moved when said nozzle is inserted into said developer outlet.

20. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein a diameter of said shutter member is the same as that of said nozzle.

21. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a seal member for closing said developer outlet, wherein an inside diameter of said seal member is less than an outside diameter of said shutter member.

22. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus comprising:  
an image carrier;  
a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;  
a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a storing member for storing powder developer therein;

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said mouth member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion, and said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and

wherein said developer container is removably mounted on a mount portion of the image forming apparatus and said mouth member of said developer container is formed at the lower portion of the developer container and said developer outlet is disposed at a side portion of said developer container when said developer container is mounted on the mount portion of the image forming apparatus.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said developer replenishing device is provided with a nozzle which is inserted into or removed from said developer outlet, and said shutter member is moved when said nozzle is inserted into said developer outlet.

25. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein a diameter of said shutter member is the same as that of said nozzle.

26. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 22,

further comprising a seal member for closing said developer outlet, and an inside diameter of said seal member is less than an outside diameter of said shutter member.

27. (Currently Amended) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged; and

a shutter including a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein all components of said shutter member being are provided completely outside of said mouth member, and

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

28. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter including a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted to said developer outlet,

wherein all components of said shutter member being are provided completely outside

of said mouth member, and

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity.

29. (Currently Amended) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted

to within said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to a direction of said developer outlet.

30. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier;

a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;

a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a developer is replenished to said developing device,

said developer container comprising:

a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted

to within said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in a direction that is substantially perpendicular to a direction of said developer outlet.

31. (Previously Presented) A developer container comprising:  
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;  
a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;  
and  
a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted  
to said developer outlet,  
wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said mouth  
member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion,  
wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and  
wherein said shutter member is not provided within said storing member.

32. (Previously Presented) An image forming apparatus comprising:  
an image carrier;  
a developing device for developing a latent image on the image carrier;  
a developer replenishing device comprising a developer container from which a  
developer is replenished to said developing device,  
said developer container comprising:  
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;  
a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;  
and  
a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted  
to said developer outlet,  
wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said mouth

member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion,

wherein said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and  
wherein said shutter member is not provided within said storing member.

33. (New) A developer container storing powder developer therein comprising:  
a storing member for storing powder developer therein;  
a mouth member having a developer outlet from which the developer is discharged;

and

a shutter member for closing said developer outlet when said shutter member is fitted  
to said developer outlet,

wherein a developer inlet to said mouth member is formed in the direction of gravity,  
and said developer outlet is formed at an angle to the direction of gravity, and  
wherein said storing member is provided with a tapered portion and said mouth  
member is provided at a tip of said tapered portion.